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The InfoGram

Volume 15 – Issue 31

July 30, 2015

Suspicious Letters Target State Offices in Oregon

On Monday and Tuesday, several of [Oregon's county sheriff's offices or courthouses received suspicious letters through the mail](#), some of them containing an unknown substance. One person is in custody and hazardous materials teams, the FBI, and U.S. Postal Inspection Service are investigating. More than half of the state's 36 counties have received letters, and it's possible more may be delivered in the next few days.

Between cyberattacks, suspicious letters, and shootings, first responder departments and personnel are being targeted. It is not limited to law enforcement agencies, though they seem to bear the brunt. Firefighters were shot at in December outside their station and one was hit.

Though these events are sporadic, this possible increase in the targeting of first responders through both violent and nonviolent ways is concerning. First responders must at all times be aware of suspicious activity, packages, or people. For training on Suspicious Activity Reporting, visit the [Nationwide SAR Initiative](#).

(Source: [Nationwide SAR Initiative](#))

Let Your Community Teach You Their Needs

Emergency communication is just as important before a disaster hits as it is during and after. Reaching the public with the correct message in the correct way – or in many correct ways – is key to ensuring they know what to do when faced with an emergency. During a crisis, the public will often communicate their needs for future communication and education by showing gaps in their response.

Taking a look over your agency's response to an emergency or disaster is wise, but do you also take a good look at how the public responded? Their actions or inactions will tell you a lot about where to focus your energy, time, and money in the future. It will also tell which group is listening or following a specific type of media and where gaps in messaging might be found.

Another concern is the focus of your pre-disaster messaging. As [Emergency Management Magazine recently stated](#), "if the goal of our risk communication is awareness, we've already lost the disaster resilience battle." The vast majority of your community is aware of their risks, so focusing on risk is unneeded. Transforming their awareness into action is the ultimate goal. To do that involves making the risk personal and asking for small steps towards reducing their risk, which will lead to

The InfoGram is distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures.

more confidence and larger steps towards the goal.

A community's needs in a disaster vary widely and many locales have minimal resources to spend trying to find where they can improve. By watching and listening, you can identify and address communications gaps, overlooked populations, and education needs.

(Source: [Emergency Management Magazine](#))

Individual First Aid Kits Save Lives in Louisiana

Individual First Aid Kits (IFAK), also known as Improved First Aid Kits, are credited with saving lives at the recent theater shooting in Louisiana. The Lafayette, Louisiana, Police Chief said [officers used IFAKs to stop the bleeding of multiple gunshot victims](#).

The IFAKs were originally a military approach for fast battlefield treatment of the wounded and were billed for self-use. Some law enforcement agencies give them to police officers to use on themselves if they are wounded with the understanding they can be used on victims of a traumatic event as well. This was the case in Lafayette. IFAKs have a variety of bandaging materials, clotting agent or dressing, gloves, a tourniquet, an airway, and more.

The FBI recently conducted a study and determined [80 percent of law enforcement respondents were only receiving the American Red Cross Basic First Aid/CPR or equivalent](#). Some agencies have begun cross training with EMS to better be prepared treat themselves or a wounded colleague, and still more are beginning to bring EMS into the team as tactical medics. Increased medical training for police is likely to continue and will improve the survival chances of officers and the public.

(Source: [JEMS](#))

Bakken Crude Oil Webinar for Emergency Managers

In 2013, the United States became the leading crude oil producer in the world. This led to a significant [increase in the transportation of crude oil to refineries via maritime, pipeline, rail, and motor carrier transportation systems](#). Railroads became the most visible example due in part to several high-profile train derailments, the most notable being the July 2013 Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, derailment and explosion resulting in 47 fatalities.

For a variety of reasons, emergency managers and first responders have been struggling to address the issues related to Bakken crude oil that may be traveling through their areas. One reason is how quickly this industry grew; another is the often unknown factor of train schedules and their load. Many trains run through fairly [rural areas with fire departments unprepared to handle a potentially massive incident](#), and there is a need to improve response to such events.

The National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) is hosting a webinar on this topic. Geared toward emergency managers, this free webinar will discuss crude transportation trends, routes, implications to critical facilities, and lessons learned from other derailments.

- When: Aug. 19, 2015 at 2 p.m. EDT;
- [Registration requested](#); after registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

(Source: [NEMA](#))

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